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# **Environment and Natural Resources Committee DRAFT Minutes**

November 2, 2011 - 9:30 a.m.

**Members Present:** Sean Weidel – City of Chicago, Joe Schuessler – Metropolitan

Water Reclamation District, Kate Agasie – Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, Marty Jaffe – University of Illinois at Chicago, Lenore Beyer-Clow – Openlands, Harlan Spiroff – DuPage Mayors and Managers Conference, Deb Stone – Cook County Department of Environmental Control, Jack Darin – Illinois Sierra Club, Jon Grosshans – USEPA Region 5, Patty Werner – Lake County SMC, Anne McKibbin – CNT Energy, Martha Dooley – Village of

Schaumburg

**Staff Present:** Jesse Elam, Tim Loftus, Bob Dean, Amy Talbot, Lori Heringa

Others Present: None

#### 1.0 Call to Order

Jack called the meeting to order at 9:33 am. A round of introductions followed.

## 2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Sean announced that the Chicago Department of Environment would be dissolved at the end of the year and that he would be moving to the Chicago Department of Transportation. After some discussion, it was suggested that a representative from the City of Chicago be asked to talk to the committee in early 2012 about the transition. Bob mentioned that the one-year GO TO 2040 implementation report would be available in January. Lenore mentioned that the US Department of the Interior had released its America's Great Outdoors report the day before; it highlighted the proposed Hack-matack National Wildlife Refuge and the Calumet Open Space Reserve.

### 3.0 Approval of Minutes from October 5, 2011

The minutes were approved as written.

# 4.0 Coordinating Committees Update

Jack reported that the last Regional Coordinating Committee meeting had focused on legislative principles. Local Planning Committee had not met. Lenore said she would not be able to attend the next one and asked for someone to fill in for her.

### 5.0 Great Lakes basin separation update

Tim reported on the progress of the Envisioning a Chicago Area Waterway System for the 21st Century project being led by the Great Lakes Commission and the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. The project has a "resource group" as well as an advisory committee composed of 35 organizations from around the basin. The funding is from a variety of sources. The consultants on the project have developed three scenarios for separating the Mississippi and Great Lakes basins, but achieving a consensus that one is preferable is not the goal of the project. Tim passed a fact sheet on the project.

It was mentioned that all scenarios assume completion of the Tunnel and Reservoir System in 2029, which provoke some discussion of how effective a solution could be against imminent invasions. There was some discussion of the relationship between this study and that of the Army Corps. It was suggested the rationale for the GLC/GLSCI project was that the Corps' study process would not be able to address wide "societal issues," and that the aggressive timeline of the GLC/GLSCI project might spur the Corps to finish faster than its target end date of 2015. Tim said that some scenario options would mean wastewater flow would return to Lake Michigan, which involves both complex engineering and complex politics. The study scenarios were compared to a baseline that includes both disinfection and nutrient removal at MWRD plants, but it was mentioned that what is included in the baseline has a major effect on the reported costs. While one member suggested the study would be an opportunity to think about the rivers afresh, as a "blank canvas," another wondered if much would be left of the rivers if the wastewater effluent flowed back to Lake Michigan.

## 6.1 Local food systems model ordinance

Lori Heringa gave a PowerPoint presentation on a Local Food Systems Model Ordinance that CMAP is developing along with partners; it is expected to be complete in summer 2012. Afterward, a member asked whether high fructose corn syrup would be considered a local food and whether the ordinance could include "sugar taxes." Another member asked if the risk of spreading invasive species would increase if aquaponics were more widespread. A member noted that the USEPA had recently released guidelines on transforming brownfields to urban agricultural use.

#### 6.2 Lake Zurich water supply project

Amy Talbot gave an overview of the Lake Zurich local technical assistance project, which would involve integrated water management across surface water, drinking water, and wastewater. The Village of Lake Zurich is now trying to decide whether to seek Lake Michigan water. The project is part of the Metropolitan Planning Council's Community Building Initiative. The project will not result in recommendations per se, but in an analysis of the issues for the village.

## 6.3 Climate change adaptation workshop follow-up

Jesse summarized the workshop that CMAP gave with ICLEI and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on climate change adaptation in September. Several committee members attended, saying that it had been helpful because rather than focusing on the question of whether climate change is occurring, it concentrated on practical questions about what assets need to be protected from weather impacts. It

included a risk assessment component, which several members found interesting. Several technical issues were raised during the workshop, and it was suggested that the American Public Works Association and the Association of State Floodplain Managers could be asked to weigh in on them.

## 7.0 Other Business

Deb Stone mentioned that Cook County had completed a draft solid waste management plan and that she would like comments from the committee on it. She asked Jesse to forward the plan.

# 9.0 Public comment

None.

# 10.0 Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Jesse Elam, CMAP staff liaison